

THE
S A I N T S
S V P P O R T,

Set out in
A SERMON PREACHED
Before the Honourable House of
COMMONS assembled in PARLIAMENT.

At a publick Fast, 29. June, 1642.

By William Gouge.

Εἰ ἐκλεκτοὶ ἦν Νεχεμίας ὁ ἐξ ἀντιόχου ἰδρυμειστον αὐτοῦ.

ECCLUS. 49. 13.

Among the Elect was Nehemiah, whose renown was great.



L O N D O N,

Printed by George Miller, for Joshua Kirtson, in Foster-lane
next to Gold-smiths Hall. 1645.



Die Mercurij, 29. Iunij, 1642.

IT is this day Ordered by the COM-
MONS now assembled in PARLIA-
MENT, That Sir *Thomas Barrington*
doe returne thanks to Doctor *Gouge* for
the great pains he tooke in his Sermon
this day preach't at *St. Margarets* in
Westminster at the intreaty of the COM-
MONS House of PARLIAMENT, this be-
ing the day of the publike Fast, and
that he be desired to Print his Sermon;
and that no man presume to print it,
but such as he shall appoint, till the
House shall take further Order.

H. Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

I Appoint *Ioshua Kirton* to Print the fore-said
Sermon.

WILLIAM GOUGE.



TO THE HONOURABLE
House of COMMONS
Assembled in Parliament.

Most worthy Patriots,



He Wise-man among his many approved Proverbs, hath this choice one, A word spoken upon his wheelles (so runnes the Originall, or set upon his measures, that is, as our English not unsiftly hath translated it, fitly spoken) A word fitly spoken, is like Apples of Gold in pictures of silver; pretious and pleasant. Pretious; as golden Apples: pleasant as yellow Gold curiously wrought and artificially wrothed in white Silver.

This Proverb turned my mind to think of some seasonable Theme, after notice was given me, that by your Order, which to me is a Law, I was deputed to preach before your Honourable Assembly. And I think I have hit upon a fit Subject, were I fit and able to handle it as it is meet to be handled in such an Assembly.

It is the Patterne of a good Patriot.

A point pertinent in Generall and Particular.

In Generall, a Patterne or Example registred and approved in sacred Scripture, shewes

1. *What is the good and acceptable Will of God.*

2. ** What in like case others are bound to doe.*

.. *† What may be done by such as Will shewonly set themselves*

to it.

Prov. 25. 11.
כֶּרֶב כֶּרֶב
עַל-פִּנְיָו

*Iuxta modos
suos. Merc.
Quibus modis
dici debet. Vat.
Tempore suo.
Hier.*

** Si inveniantur exempla quae nos per rectam ducunt viam, sequenda sunt. Hier. ad Celant.
† Excitamus in ipem, quae nos etiam ita posse vivere, qui homines sumus, ex eo quod aliqui homines ita vixerunt, nihil me desperamus. Aug. de Trin. 18. c. 9.*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

4. *What, when it is so done, may be pleaded in an humble-self denying manner before God.*

In Particular this Example of Nehemiah shewes,

1. *Who is a good Patriot.*
2. *How he ought to behave himselfe.*
3. ** What difficulties and dangers attend him.*
4. *What opposition and contradiction he is like to meet with.*
5. *What resolutions become him.*
6. *On Whom his confidence is to be placed.*

Our times are in many things not much unlike to the time wherein Nehemiah came to Jerusalem.

Grievances in State, and Corruptions in Church.

He did as much as in him lay (and that indeed was very much) for redressing of the one, and removing of the other.

His patterne is not onely an Instruction, to teach what is to be done: or an Incitation to stir up such as know what is to be done: but also a Iustification and Approbation of such as doe as he did.

And they may take for such an end, as Iosephus testifies that Nehemiah had. His testimony is this, When Nehemiah had done most magnificently many good things worthy of praise, being an old man he died, and left behind him the name of a gracious, just and bountifull man towards his owne Nation.

The Lord encline our great Kings heart to you, as he did the heart of Nehemiahs King to him, and so worke by you, as he did by him: that every of you may wish such confidence say to your God, as he did to his, Thinke on me, my GOD for good, according to all that I have done for this People. This is, this shall be, the prayer of

* Δι' σκολα γὰρ
ἡγλα Plur de
Lib. infit.

Πολλὰ καὶ κα-
λὰ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων
ἀξία οὐλομένη-
σιν· ὁ Νε-
μίας ἐβλέψεν
ἐν αὐτῷ γῆρας
ἀφικόμενος, &c.
Ioseph. Antiq.
Iud. l. 11 c. 5.

Your daily Oratour

William Gouge.

A
SERMON PREACHED
 Before the Honourable House of
COMMONS, at the celebration of a

FAST 29. June, 1642.

NEHEM. 5. 19.

*Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all
 that I have done for this people.*



Hose two motives which endued the good Patriot *Nehemiah* to preferre this Petition to his God, have endued me to choose it for my Text, to handle it before so many worthy Patriots as are now met together to present their humble supplications to their God.

The two motives were these,

1. The many, great, good things which he had done, for the Church and State.

2. The many, great, desperate dangers which he had met with, and knew he should further meet with in prosecuting his good beginnings.

Whether there be not at this time the like occasions for the representative body of this Kingdome, as one man, to pray and say, *Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people*, let the times judge.

To this Text the more diligent heed is to be given, in that it containeth the last memorable matter which the Holy Ghost saw

B

meet

Nehem. 13. 31.

Ezr. 5. 1.

Hag. 1. 1.

Zech. 1. 1.

7. 1.

Malachi, id est,

Esdras, post

Aggeum et

Zechariam, qui

sub Dario pro-

phetaverunt,

fuisse credendum

est. Hier. in pro.

in Malachi:

Lege Clem. A.

lex. Strom. l. 1.

Hest. 1. 1.

Apud Hebræos

Esdra, Ne-

miegh, sermones

in unum volu-

mē coartantur.

Hier. in Esd. et

Nem. prefat.

Ezra 2. 3.

3. 8.

6. 15.

7. 6.

* After the re-
turne of the
Jewes, Cyrus
reigned nine
years. One Da-
nius 36. Aha-

meet to commend to his Church in the Old Testament. For the former part of it (wherein the maine substance of the whole lyeth) is repeated in the last clause of this Booke, which is the last Booke of the Old Testament. For all the Prophesies registred in the Old Testament were before *Nehemiah's* time: which thus appeareth. All but the three last were before the Captivity of the Jewes in *Babylon*. Two of those last three, *Haggai* and *Zechary* uttered their Prophesies about the time that the Temple was finished, in the foure first yeares of *Darius* his reigne. *Malachi* who is the last of all the Prophets, prophesied anon after the Temple was built, as is evident by the maine scope of his Prophetic: So as he may well be thought to have uttered his Prophetic in the dayes of *Darius*, or in that time of *Artaxerxes* reigne, wherein *Ezra* came first to *Jerusalem*. For *Malachi* is supposed to be *Ezra*, and called *Malachi*, because he was the Lords Messenger.

As for the booke of *Hester*, though it be placed after this of *Nehemiah*, yet is it an History of many yeares before: for the things therein recorded were in the reigne of *Ahasuerus*, of whom mention is made, *Ezra* 4. 6. He ended his dayes fourscore yeares before *Nehemiah* came to *Jerusalem*. The Compiler of the bookes of the Old Testament, had more respect to the order of *quitter* then of *time* in placing *Ester* after *Nehemiah*. For *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* are one continued History, which sets downe the restauration of the Jewes after their captivity. Both were written by *Ezra*, and of old called *The first and second booke of Esdras*: yea, by the *Hebræes* they were both brought into one Volume.

For the foresaid end of setting the State of the Jewes there were three solemne commings of three famous persons to *Jerusalem*. The first was of *Zerubbabel*, who being a young man laid the foundation of the Temple in the reigne of *Cyrus*, and being an old man finished it in the reigne of *Darius*. The second was of *Ezra*, already Scribe in the Law of *Moses*, whose coming was about one hundred thirty and three yeares after the first, in the seventh yeare of *Artaxerxes*. He came to instruct the Jewes in the Law of God. The third was of *Nehemiah*, thirteene yeares after *Ezra*. The end of his coming was to build up the City of God and the wall thereof, that Gods people might therein more free-

ly observe Gods Ordinances; and live in safety and security from their enemies: When he could thinke he found many Grievances in the State; and corruptions in the Church: *Those* he redressed, *these* he removed: and withall settled the *Sabbaths Sanctification*.

To shew whence he received his courage to doe what he did, notwithstanding the strong and great oppositions against him; it is oft noted in this booke, that his heart was on his God, to whom on all occasions he preferred his prayer in the beginning, progresse, and end of all.

So soon as he heard of an occasion of going to *Jerusalem*, he made his prayer to God: It was the first thing he did: Ever and anon was his heart lift up unto God in the progresse: Eight particular instances thereof betwixt his first and last prayer, are expressly noted in this History. This History is concluded with the same prayer that is in my Text.

Thus you see how my Text is inserted in the middle of this History, as a demonstration of the support whereon this Patriot rested, and whereby he was encouraged in his good, great, difficult, dangerous attempts.

May I in this Auditory have leave to give, *meo more & modo*; after my ordinary and plaine manner, the *Grammatical* Interpretation and *Logickall* Resolution of the Text; a more ready way will be made thereby for raising and prosecuting proper *Theologicall* Observations thereout.

First, therefore of the sence.

The word translated, *Thinke*, properly signifieth *Remember*. So it is in other places translated even by these Translators; and that six times in this book applied to God.

It importeth two things,

1. To keep and hold fast in mind and memory what is once knowne: So it is opposed to forgetfulness: as where the Law saith, *Remember and Forget not*.

2. To call again to mind and memory what was once knowne, but after forgotten: in which sence saith *Pharaohs* Butler, *I doe remember my faults this day*. He had forgotten his faults, his imprisonment, his dream, the interpretation and issue thereof (all which are implied under this phrase, *The chiefe Butler did use Remember Joseph, but forgot him*) But by the wise mans ignorance

suerm 22. One
Araxerxes 40.
Another, *Dei*,
us 19. Another
Araxerxes 7.
before *13.4*
came.

Neh. 5. 1, & c.

13. 4.

Neh. 13. 5, & c.

Neh. 1. 4. & c.

* Neh. 2. 4.

& 4. 4. & 7. 9.

& 5. 9. & 6. 14.

& 13. 14, 22.

29.

כִּדְרִי

Nehem. 1. 8.

& 6. 14.

& 13. 14, 22.

29, 31.

Deut. 9. 7.

Gen. 41. 9.

and 40. 23.

of the meaning of *Pharaohs* dreames, he remembered and called to mind his faults, and what followed thereupon.

In these two respects a word derived from this root is put for a *Memoriall*: and for *Records*: by which matters are so kept and retained, as they are not lost or forgotten: and by which if matters be forgotten they may be againe called to mind, as *Mordocai's* faithfullnesse to the King being forgotten, was, by the Kings hearing the *Records*, brought to his mind.

This act of *Remembering* is in sacred Scripture applied to God and man.

To man properly in both the fore-mentioned acceptations. As the two proofes doe shew. For to man it was said, *Remember and forget not*: and he was a man that said, *I doe remember my faults*.

To God it is most properly applied in the former signification. For he ever fast holds in memory and never forgets what he once knowes: And *kyoune unto God are all his workes from the beginning of the world*.

Yea, also in the latter signification it is oft attributed to God, as where it is said, *Did not the Lord remember them? and came it not into his mind?* The latter phrase sheweth that the act of remembering attributed to God in the former clause, is meant of calling to mind what was formerly knowne. *Job* oft calleth on God to remember him in this sence. In this respect God is said to have *Remembrancers*: to whom he thus saith, *Put me in Remembrance*: and to this end he is said to have a book of *Remembrance*. But surely these things cannot be properly spoken of God. They are to be taken tropically, by way of resemblance, after the manner of man. When men having forgotten a friend, neglect him, doe nothing for him, suffer him to want, to be oppressed, to lye in prison, or remaine in captivity, but being put in mind that he is such and such a friend, doe good to him and succour him, are said to remember him: So God (when after long suffering his children to want such and such a blessing, or to lye under such and such a crosse, he bestoweth on them the blessing which they so long waited for, or freeth them from the crosse under which they lay so long), though he never forgot them, but knew and saw their want and pressure, is said to remember them. Thus he re-

membered

תִּזְכֹּר
Exod. 13. 12.
תִּזְכֹּר
Ezra. 6. 1.

Deut. 9. 7.
Gen. 41. 9.

Ps. 111. 18.

Jer. 44. 31.

Job 7. 7.
and 10. 9.
and 14. 13.
תִּזְכֹּר
See Margin on
Isai. 62. 6.
Isai. 43. 26.
תִּזְכֹּר
Mal. 3. 16.
אִם יִשְׁכַּח

numbered Rachel, who had long wanted a child : and the Israelites, who had long lyeen under bondage.

Gen 30. 22.
Exod. 2. 24.

In briefe *Nehemiah* by this phrase, *Thinke upon* or *Remember*, intendeth that God would so deale with him, as he himselte might have assurance and others evidence, that God did thinke upon what he did and well remember it.

This Petition he makes, not as doubting of Gods good-will to him, but as resting on God for some evidence thereof. For what beleevers expect from God they pray for : and what they pray for, with confidence they expect to receive.

To give further evidenc of his speciall affiance on God, he restraineth this act of Gods good-will to himselte in particular, by this clause, *upon me*, and it carrieth this Emphasis, that though the Lord regarded not them who testified no hearty affection to himselte, his house or people, yet he would thinke upon him whose heart was set on all these. *Thinke on me*.

The next clause, *my God*, doth yet further set out that his speciall affiance on God. *My*, is an appropriating particule : yet such an one as admits others that are of like quality. Nor this, nor the former particule of speciality, nor *Me*, nor *My* is to be taken exclusively, as if he exempted all but himselte from these privileges, for before this, he desireth God to thinke on others like himselte, thus, *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine eare be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants who desire to praise thy name*. And though sometimes he expresse the relation betwixt God & himselte in the singular number, *my God*, yet ^b other times in the plurall number, thus, *our God*, yea and in the second and third persons, thus, *your God*, *his God*, *c their God*.

Neh. 1. 11.
a Neh. 2. 8, 18.
& 6. 14. & 7. 5.
& 13. 14, 22,
29, 31.
b Neh. 4. 29,
20.
& 13. 18, 27.
c Neh. 8. 9.
d Neh. 13. 26.
e Neh. 11. 45.

He useth the first person and singular number (*my God*) to testify the full assurance he had of his own interest in God. He useth other persons and the plurall number (*His God*, *Our God*, *Your God*, *Their God*) to intimate the strong perswasion he had of others like interest in God. The former is *iudicium certitudinis*, an assured knowledge : the latter *iudicium caritatis*, a charitable beliefe. That these two may stand together is evident by these phrases joyned together, *Thy God shall be my God : & I ascend so my God and your God*.

f Ruth 1. 16.
g 10. 12, 17.

De istis decem
nominibus lege
Hier. Epist ad
Marcel
See also the
Churches con-
quest on Exod.
17.15. See 7.2.

אֱלֹהִים
אֱלֹהִים

Verbatim Dij
creavit.

Gen. 1.1.

^a O Pater, & bo-
minum, divumq;
aeterna potest as.
Virg. *Æneid.*
10.

¹ Reg. omnipo-
rens Neptune
invoco, Cic
Tusc. 1.4.

² Ovid. Met. 1.1.

¹ Iovis nutu &
arbitrio cæli m,
terra, mariaq;
reguntur, Cic. de
Fin.

By the way take notice, that the mention which I made of the singular number, hath respect to the translation, rather then to the original, especially in the title *G O D*. For the Hebrew word is one of those ten titles which in sacred Scripture are as names attributed to God; and it is of the plurall number. As all the other titles have their significations and mysteries, so this. It importeth a plurality of persons: yet so as in construction it intimateth an unity, an unity in nature, the unity of the Deity. For it is joyned with a verb of the singular number: as in the first sentence of the Bible, which in other languages may imply some Grammaticall incongruity; but it expresseth a true Orthodox, Theologicall Mystery: which God from the beginning would have to be knowne for his owne glory and Churches good. For (even our enemies, worshippers of false gods being Judges) our God is such a God, as no other God could ever be imagined like unto him. Many of Gods incommunicable properties and workes have (though most unjustly and falsely) been attributed to false gods, as ^h eternity, ¹ omnipotency, ^k creation of Heaven and Earth, ^l divine providence, and other the like. But it never came into the mind of any Idolater to imagine his god to be three in one. The *Trinity* in *Unity* is a mystery of mysteries, making much to the honour of him that is knowne and believed to be such a God.

By it also we know and beleeve that the *Spirit* which proceedeth from the *Father* and the *Son*, and helpeth our infirmities, emblesh us to doe the will of God and establisheth us against all assaults, is true God: and that the *Sonne* of God, the only begotten of the *Father*, the *Mediator* betwixt God and man, is true God: and that the *Father* to whom we have access for all needfull blessing, is true God. Thus we have not many gods for many purposes; but one God for all turnes. One to enable us to go to the throne of grace: One to mediate for us there: One to accept us there, all one God. Is not this a comfortable mystrie?

But this by the way.

That for which he desireth his *God to thinke upon him*, is for good. The Hebrew word properly signifieth goodnesse, and is so translated in sundry places, oft in the *Psalmes* and *Prophets*. Some therefore here take it for a property in God, and the cause or ground

לְטוֹבָה

³ Sam. 7.28.

¹ Kin. 8.66.

ground of his faith and hope, and of all blessing: as if he had thus expressed it, *Thinke on me for thy goodnesse sake.* This is in it selfe a good sence, and answerable to this of David, *Remember thou me for thy goodnesse sake o Lord.* But in my Text the particle of relation to God, (*Thy*) is not exprest, and the preposition ? exprest, admits not that sence. Therefore the LXX. Greeke interpreters, the ancient Latine and sundry o her translate it as our English, *for good*: in like manner is this very word with this preposition turned (*Gen. 50. 20.*) *unto good.* Thus it sets downe the end why he would have God to thinke on him, namely, some good, benefit, blessing to himselfe. That this is here intended, is further evident by that which followes, *according to all that I have done, &c.*

Psal. 137.

עַל אֲדָבָה,
זוֹ בִּטְחוֹנִי.

Looke upon your bookes and ye will find this word, *according*, in another character, which sheweth that it is not in the Originall, as indeed it is not. Some therefore joyne these two words, *good, all, together, thus, for good of all that I have done.* This exposition might well stand, but that there is an *accent* or *pause* annexed to the former word, which distinguisheth sentences, or at least the parts of a sentence. Something therefore must be understood to make up the latter part of this sentence: and surely our English hath hit upon the fittest supplement, as the ancient Latin, and sundry other languages. The particle (*according*) here supplied, is oft on like occasions expressed, as where the Psalmist saith to God, *Thou renderest to every man according to his workes.* By this supplement no merit, but the kind or quality, and measure or quantity of reward is intended. In regard of the kinde, *whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reape.* He that soweth wheat shall reape wheat: he that soweth tares shall reape tares: *He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reape corruption: but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reape life everlasting.* In regard of the measure, *He which soweth bountifully shall reape bountifully.*

In bonum omnium que feci.

וְהָיָה

Distinguit mediam sententiam, & respondet colon.

Secundum omnia.

Psal. 62. 12.

כְּמַעֲשָׁיו

Gal. 6. 7. 8.

2 Cor. 9. 6.

Therefore he adds the next generall particle *All*, for *All* compriseth many things under it, and excludeth not any small.

כֹּל

That which he pleads of his owne doing in this phrase (*that I have done*) is not, to be taken in reference to his owne ability, in and of himselfe: but to the manifestation of the power of Gods

אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי

Spirit.

Zech. 4. 6.

1 Cor. 15. 10.

Spirit in him, which God himselfe thus expresseth, *Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit*; and Saint Paul thus, *I have laboured more abundantly then they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

על העמ

הזה

Exod. 19. 5.

For further amplification of what he did, he adds the persons in whose behalfe he did all that he did, *for this people*. He meanes hereby the *Jewes*, among whom he then was, and thereupon as pointing at them, he useth a double demonstrative particule, as if to the full it had bin thus expressed, *for this people*, even *this*. Well might he set this emphasis upon that people, because at that time they were the only Church of God, a peculiar treasure unto him above all people.

Thus have you the plaine meaning of the Text.

The summe of all in two words is,

Saints Support.

Which is in one word *G O D*.

This *Support of Saints* is set downe in forme of a Petition.

Therein is expressed.

1. The *Person* petitioned.

2. The *Points* prayed.

The *Person* is set out,

1. By his generall title, *G O D*.

2. By his speciall relation, *MY*.

In the *Point* prayed for, ye may observe,

1. The *Kind*

2. The *End* } of it.

The *Kind* points at,

1. An *All* desired of God, *THINK UPON*.

2. The speciall *Object* thereof, *ME*.

The *End* is,

1. Generally propounded, *FOR GOOD*.

2. Particularly amplified.

In the amplification are distinctly set downe.

1. The *Ground*, *THAT I HAVE DONE*.

2. The *Rule*, *ACCORDING TO*.

3. The *Extent*, *ALL*.

4. The *Restraint* or *Limitation*, *FOR THIS PEOPLE*.

Thinke upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

The

The Observations hence arising, are these.

I. *GOD is the Support of Saints.* This Saint by directing this his Petition to God, gives instance hereof.

II. *The LORD is a peculiar GOD to a Believer.* This appropriating particle, *MY*, being uttered by a Believer in reference to God, evinceth as much.

III. *GOD hath Remembrancers.* He that said to God, *Thinke upon, or Remember*, was such an one,

III. *GODS mind is soonest drawne to his owne.* He that could say, *my God*, was one of Gods owne, and thereupon was perswaded to say to his God, *Thinke upon ME*, in confidence that God would soon so doe.

V. *Prayer may be made for ones owne good.* This phraze for good, intends as much.

VI. *Workes may be pleaded before GOD.* So doth he that in his prayer to God thus pleads, *that I have done*,

VII. *Mans Workes are the rule of Gods reward.* This is implied by the word fitly supplied, *according*.

VIII. *Every thing Well done shall be rewarded.* This generall particle *All*, extends to every good worke, and intends such an extent of reward.

IX. *Good done to GODS people is most acceptable.* Thus much is manifested, as by the expression of *this people*, so by the emphasis added thereto, *this people*, even *this*.

These are the principall intendments of this Text.

That ye may the better discern the true and just ground of all these points, and especially of this Patriots confidence, where-by he was emboldened to put his God in mind, to *thinke on him for good*, according to *all that he had done for his people*. I suppose it will not be impertinent, nor yet unprofitable to give you a briefe view of such particular acts done by him, as are in this book distinctly specified from the beginning to my Text. Here-by ye may have a pertinent patterne for Justification of what ye have done, and direction for what remaines yet to be done: and withall ye may see in what courses and causes ye may with confidence depend on your God, and say, *Thinke on us, our Gods, for good, according to all that we have done for this people*.

I. The first particular noted of him is an inquisitive dispositi-

Nehem. 1. 2.

Ignoti nulla
cupido.

Neh. 1. 4.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

Judg. 10. 16.

Isai. 63. 15.

Hos. 11. 8.

Amos 6. 1. & c.

Nehem. 1. 4.

1 Sam. 13. 12.

A love princi-
ple.

on after the State of the Church, how it fared with her. So soone as he heard that *Haman* and others were come from *Judah*, he asked them concerning the *Jewes*, and concerning *Jerusalem*. He himselfe was in a safe and secure place: He had the favour of the greatest Monarch then on Earth: yet he thought not that enough: he must know how the Church doeth. By this enquiry he came to know what otherwise, it may be, he should never have knowne: and then the Church might have wanted all that good which he did for it. What eye sees not, or care heares not, heart rues not. Naturall men are in a most wofull plight: But because they know nothing of it, they are no whit moved with it, nor care to seeke any redresse for it. Many do nothing for the Church, because they know nothing of the Church. Be we therefore inquisitive after it.

2. That which he heard of the Churches distresse wrought much compassion in him: For he *sate down and wept, and mourned certaine dayes*. By this sympathy he shewes himself a true member of the Church. *If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it*. This cannot but becom the best. For of God himselfe it is thus said, *His soule was grieved for the affliction of Israel*. In such cases *his bowels* are said to *sound*: and *his heart* to be *turned within him*. Art thou Lord so affected, and afflicted at our misery, and we no whit moved with our own or others distresses? *Woe*, saith the Prophet, *woe to them that are at ease, &c. that stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the Lambes out of the flock: that chant to the sound of the viol: that drinke wine in bowles, and anoint themselves with the chief ornaments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph*. What good can be expected from such sencelesse dispositions? That compassion which was wrought in this Patriot, set him on work, to doe all that good which he did for the Church. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in him*.

3. Before he attempts any thing, he goes to God. First to God, then to the King. *I prayed*, saith he, *before the God of Heaven*. This made all that he did so successfull as it was. *Saul*, though an hypocrite, could make this apology for his over-hasty sacrifice, *The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord*. The very Heathen did use to begin all with their god. Should not we Christians so doe with

our God? I am confident ye so doe: and thereupon with confidence I may say, Goe on, and prosper.

4. He added one kind of prayer to another: to his daily, ordinary prayers, he added extraordinary. The phrase of praying *day and night*, implies his constant morning and evening prayer, wherein he was ever mindfull of the children of Israel. His *fasting* was an evidence of extraordinary prayer. This particule, *now, or this day*, prefixed before *day and night*, sheweth that in this day of extraordinary prayer helped by fasting, he omitted not his ordinary morning and evening devotion. Thus much was prefigured in the Law. For every day one Lambe was to be offered in the morning, and another at even: on their feast dayes they had other solemne sacrifices enjoyned, yet so as with those extraordinary sacrifices they joynd their daily morning and evening burnt offering. In the 28. and 29. Chapters of *Numbers*, where those extraordinary sacrifices on their severall dayes are expressly set downe, this proviso (*beside the continuall burnt offering*) is fifteen times repeated. Ordinary and extraordinary prayer joynd together, will add life and power each to other. Ordinary morning prayer may prove to be a good preparation to the extraordinary ordinance: and the evening ordinary prayer a means of calling our failings in the extraordinary to mind, of craving and obtaining pardon for the same, and procuring a blessing in all. As for extraordinary prayer quickned with fasting, it was never performed (if at least it were rightly performed) without some more then ordinary blessing. That Divell, which cannot otherwise be cast out, may be cast out by prayer and fasting. *What therefore God hath joynd together, let no man put asunder.*

I might here distinctly set out the particular branches of his powerfull prayer, as;

1. His solemne preamble, whereby he sheweth how his mind was so fixed on Gods greatness and goodness as it had wrought a mixture of feare and faith.

2. His humble confession of sinne: of his owne sin, of the sin of his fathers house, yea, and of the whole house of Israel. This, penitently done, is the ready way for obtaining mercy and pardon.

Nehem. 1. 6.

ver. 4.

וְהָיָה

וְהָיָה

וְהָיָה

Exo. 29. 38, 39.
Num. 28. 3, &c.

Numb. 28. 10,
15, 23, 24, 31.
& 29. 6, 11, 16,
19, 21, 25, 28,
32, 34, 38.

Matth. 17. 21.

Nehem. 1. 5.

ver. 6.

Psal. 32. 5.

Prov. 28. 13.

1 Joh. 1. 9.

Nehem. 1. 8, 9.

3. His pressing Gods own Promise, whereby he testifieth on what ground his faith was founded.

ver. 10.

4. His pleading that special relation which was betwixt God and them for whom he prayed, thus, *These are thy servants, and thy people.* By this he gives proof that the marke he aims at is Gods Glory.

ver. 11.

5. His putting God in mind of his former dealing with them, thus, *Whom thou hast redeemed, &c.* This shewes, that by God himself, and his former dealing with them, he is put on to commend their cause to him.

6. His quickning of his own spirit, by his earnest, ardent expression of his mind.

But it being my purpose only to cull out such distinct acts of his as moved him to put God in mind of him for good, it might hinder my purpose to insist on every particular circumstance in those severall acts, that are recorded of him.

I returne therefore to my principall purpose.

Nehem. 3. 4.

7. His heart was ready on the sudden to be raised to God. For when the King gave him occasion to make his mind knowne to him, he instantly *prayed to the God of Heaven*: Not by turning aside and uttering any words to God, but by lifting up his heart to God. This is called an ejaculation of the spirit: when the spirit within a man casteth up a sudden desire to God. This sudden desire might be, that God would direct him in ordering his desire to the King, and that God would incline the Kings heart to grant his desire. So much was before thus expressed, *Grant me mercy in the sight of this man*, meaning the King. This may be as fervent and prevalent, as a solemne prayer uttered with the mouth, witnesse that ejaculation of *Moses* spirit, when he was in the midst of the people; and encouraging them against *Pharaohs* furious hoste that hotly pursued them: He then uttered no words of prayer, yet of that ejaculation, or inward desire, saith God, *Why criest thou unto me?* which phrase implyeth great fervency. This frequently and heartily used argueth an heavenly mind, and holy familiarity with God. This is one way whereby we may pray *continually*, even by the readinesse of the heart to pray at all times, in all places, on all occasions, when we are alone, or in company, in conference, reading, studying, wor-

Exod. 14. 15.

king.

king, or doing any other lawfull thing. Thus may I now in preaching, pray: thus may you even now in hearing, pray. Affuredly, if we were well disposed hereunto, we might have much better successe in many things we doe, then we have. What good successe had this Patriot hereupon? God moved the King to grant whatsoever he desired. In sending, in delivering Petitions to the King on earth, *Pray to the G O D of Heaven, as Nehemiah did.*

Nehem. 2. 8.

6. Together with all sorts of prayer to God, he useth humane helps. He gratefully acknowledgeth the Kings former favour: He humbly supplicateth leave to goe to Judah: he desireth a safe convoy: he craveth the Kings Letters patent for all usefull and needfull Timber out of his Forrests. All these were lawfull meanes: and such meanes are the hand of Gods providence, whereby he bringeth matters to passe. It is true indeed, that *Man liveth not by bread alone*: meanes alone without Gods blessing doe no good. *Asa's* fault consisted not simply in this, that in his disease he sought to the *Physicians*, but in this, that he sought not to the Lord. A Woe is denounced against those that take counsel, but not of the Lord, and that cover with a covering, but not of his Spirit. But true also it is, that where meanes are meet to be used, God will not bring matters to passe without meanes. In the great danger wherein *Paul*, and all in the Ship with him were, God promised that there should be no losse of any mans life among them: yet when the Ship-men (who are an especiall meanes of helpe in feare of wreck) were about to fly out of the Ship, *Paul said, Except these abide in the Ship, ye cannot be saved.* It will therefore be our wisdome to observe in the matters that we enterprize, what lawfull meanes may be helpfull thereto, and with prayer to use the same. By using meanes without prayer we presume: by praying without the use of means we tempt God.

Neh. 2. 5.

ver 7.

ver. 8.

Deut. 8. 3.

2 Chro. 16. 12.

Isai. 40. 1.

31. 1.

7. He goes himselfe to the place where he intended to doe good. *I came to Jerusalem*, saith he. The desire that he had to have the work thoroughly done, moved him to go himselfe about it, and not to put it off to others. If men of place and power, who wish well to Church and State, were so minded, there would not be so many miscarriages in weighty matters, as oft fall out. The *Shunamite* would not leave the Prophet, till he him-

Neh. 2. 11. 3.

1 King. 4. 30.]

Oculus Domini
paſcit equum.

ſelfe went to her child. His ſervant went with his ſtaffe, but effected nothing; When he himſelfe came, the deed was ſoone done. A difference betwixt a Gentleman that holdeth his land in his owne hands, and ſcarce raiſeth up ſo much as the ordinary rent amounts to, and the Farmer, who beſide the rent, raiſeth up a good livelyhood, herein lyeth: That the Gentleman lying in bed, or following his pleaſures, ſaith to his ſervants, *Goe Sirs*, intending that they ſhould go about his work: But the Farmer ſaith, *Goe Sirs*, that is, *Goe We*, together, or goe with me. This Proverbe, *The eye of the Maſter makes the horſe fat*, intendeth as much. This may be a good patterne to you Governours, to us Miniſters, and to all that have the charge of matters of moment.

Nehem. 2. 13.

8. He himſelfe taketh an eſpeciall view of the ruines of *Ieruſalem*. *I went out by night, ſaith he, and viewed the wals of Ieruſalem, which were broken downe, &c.* He had heard thereof before: but now he was an eye-witneſſe; and this increaſed his compaſſion, enflamed his zeale, and ſtirred him up more diligently and thoroughly to repaire the ruines, and make up the breaches which he had ſeen with his owne eyes. Sight of diſtreſſe is of great force to work on the affections, and to procure ſuccour. The Samaritane *who came where the wounded man was, and ſaw him, had compaſſion on him*, and ſuccoured him. Doe ye likewiſe what ye can, to take ſpeciall notice of the particular caſes of ſuch as are in diſtreſſe, that nothing beguile you, nothing be concealed from you. Goe to priſons, viſit the ſick, caſt your eyes on miſerable objects.

Luke 10. 33.
*Tu deſcende in-
daginis ſtudio,
ne quid ſit quod
ſalut, aut late-
at. Ambroſio de
Patriarch. Abr.
l. 1. c. 6.*

Nehem. 2. 17.

9. He puts others in mind of that which he and they ſaw: and ſtirres them up thereby to be aſſiſtant to him, in theſe words, *ye ſee the diſtreſſe that we are in, &c. Come, and let us build up the wall, &c.* This he did to ſtirre up ſuch a ſpirit in many others, as he himſelfe had, and to obtaine their help: that ſo the great worke might the better goe on. *For many hands make light worke.* The fruit and benefit hereof is diſtinctly ſet downe in the third Chapter. Wherefore thinke it not enough (in great matters, which of and by your ſelves ye cannot to purpoſe accompliſh) thinke it not enough to doe, even to the uttermoſt what lyes in your owne power: ſtirre up others to be aiding and aſſiſting to you. This juſtifies your Proteſtation, your Subſidies, Pole-money, Land-

*Multorum ma-
nibus grande le-
vatur onus.*

Land-rate, Loanes, and other meanes used for assistance from others in the weighty works you have in hand.

10. He manifesteth invincible courage against such adversaries as sought to blast all his good intents and endeavours. *When Sanballat and others laughed them to scorne, and despised them, he with a confident spirit said, The God of Heaven he will prosper us; Therefore we his servants will arise and build. Behold his courage, behold the ground thereof. We will arise and build. O undaunted Spirit! God will prosper us: a sure and safe ground. It in any thing ye imitate this Patriot, herein imitate him. Be not discouraged by adversaries. Where God openeth a great and effectuall doore to his servants, there will be many adversaries: But in nothing be terrified by them: and that ye may in nothing be terrified by them, so place your confidence on God, as ye may in faith say, The God of Heaven he will prosper us.*

Neh. 2. 19, 10.

1 Cor. 16. 5.
Phil. 1. 18.

The third Chapter distinctly describeth the assistance that was afforded by others in fencing the City, and is an expresse demonstration of the benefit of helpers, set downe in the ninth branch. I therefore passe over this Chapter, that I may hasten to my Text.

11. In an holy zeale, and just indignation, he imprecates vengeance against proud, scornfull, implacable enemies of Gods Church, in this manner, *Turne their reproch upon their owne head, and give them for a prey in the land of their captivity, and cover not their iniquity, &c.* I must confesse that the imprecations of holy men recorded in sacred Scripture, are sharpe, two-edged tooles: not for every ones handling. When Christs Disciples would have commanded fire (as *Elisha* did) to come downe from Heaven to consume the Samaritans, he rebuked them, and said, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* Particular imprecations against particular persons are not for every spirit; but for such extraordinary spirits, as Prophets and Apostles had: Yet thus farre may every faithfull spirit testifie his holy zeale in this very kind of imprecation, by an indefinite extending it against such as are indeed mischievous and irreconcilable enemies of the Church. But because *Saul* may prove a *Paul*, and a persecutor may prove a Preacher of the Gospell, we may not imprecate against any particular persons, yet against their mischievous practices we may.

Nehem. 4. 4.

Luk. 9. 54. 55.

12. Them whom he incited to assist him, he encouraged, and that:

Nchem. 2. 10.
and 4. 14.

2 Cor. 1. 4.

Luk. 22. 32.

Neh. 4. 8, 11, 12
Ver. 9, 16, 17,
20, 21, 23.

Neh. 5. 1, &c.

ver. 6, &c.

that by the same ground of encouragement whereby he himselfe was encouraged. He was encouraged by his confidence on God; and thus he encourageth others. *Be not ye afraid of them, remember the Lord, who is great and terrible.* To such a purpose tends this of the Apostle, *God comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of God.* Ye that are strong, doe what ye can to strengthen others: Ye whose spirits are lofty and steddly, lift up and hold up the spirits of others: put courage into others, ye that are men of courage. This was Christs advice to Peter, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren, &c.*

13. In an extraordinary case he useth extraordinary diligence and vigilancy. The manifold mischievous plots of their adversaries shewed their danger to be more then ordinary. In this case, he set a watch against them day and night: *One halfe of his servants wrought in the worke, the other halfe held offensive and defensive weapons. Every workman wrought with one hand, and with another held a weapon, they had a trumpet to draw them all to the place of danger; they daily watched from the rising of the Morning till the Starres appeared: none of them put off their clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing.* Is not now the more then ordinary paines, watching, loosing meales meat, defensive provision, and diligence used by our Parliament, is it not every way warrantable and commendable? Have we any cause to complaine thereof? Have we not just cause to blesse God therefore?

14. He redresses home-grievances. He thought it not enough to secure the City from publike enemies, unlesse also he eased the common people from the oppression of their Governours. For *there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jewes,* who were Governours, and had power over them. The particulars of their complaints are expressly related. This good Patriot heares them all, is much offended at the wrongdoers, adviseth about redresse, and so orders the matter, that for the wrong done, restitution and satisfaction is made; and for the future, order is taken that there be no more such grievances.

-Ye that justly have obtained the name of *good Patriots*, and have begun to redresse many grievances, goe on in that good worke, till through Gods blessing and your endeavours it be
brought

brought to some good perfection, as *Nehemiah's* was. Heare complaints, receive Petitions, examine Accusations, punish Delinquents, cause restitution of that which is unjustly taken away, and satisfaction for that which is wrongfully done, to be made.

Ye are now the great Judges of this land; and of old it was said, that the Altar and Iudge are as one, in that such as are wronged fly to the one and the other for succor. Such was *Iob's* practise. *I delivered*, saith he, *the poore that cryed, and the fatherlesse, and him that had none to help him.* Remembrance hereof much comforted him against his friends unjust calumnies in the depth of his great miseries.

15. He relieved such as were in distresse. It was not a pharisaicall brag, but a knowne truth, which he thus professeth of himselfe, *We after our ability have redeemed our brethren, &c.* To him it seemed not sufficient to redresse the wrongs which others had done, and to take off the heavy burdens which others had laid upon the backs of their poore brethren (which was a great privitive good) unless also positively he relieved with money, corne, and other necessities, and that gratis, such as were in need.

Hereby we see how farre our works of mercy ought to extend. This to the life is thus exemplified by a Prophet, in the name of the Lord: *Is not this the Fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickednesse, to undoe the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed goe free, and that ye breake every yoke?* (Though this be most properly meant of redressing such wrongs, as men themselves doe, yet may it also be extended to redressing the wrongs which others do; but for the point which we have in hand, marke what followes) *Is it not to breake thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poore that are cast out, to thy house, &c.* This is the extent of charity.

16. He brought them to a solemne covenant and oath to bind them to that good order that he had made, lest they should start from it. It is thus expressed, *Iooke an oath of them that they should doe according to their promise.* (Their promise was this, *We will restore them, and will require nothing of them: so will we doe as thou sayest.*) Yea he made a terrible imprecation against every one that performed not this promise. He feared lest in his absence, when he should in the time limited returne to the King, they would

D

returne

*Iudex & Ara
idem: pariter
enim ad utrumq;
confugiant qui
iniuria afflic-
tuntur. Archibite
diff.
Iob 29, 12.*

Neh. 5, 8.

IIa. 58, 6, 7.

Neh 5, 11.

2 Chr. 15. 12.
&c.

returne to their former exactions and oppressions. Therefore he would hereby restrain them. A pious and prudent course. The like course we read to be taken by *Asha*, who bound his people by *Covenant* and *Oath* to remaine faithfull with the Lord:

This is the rather to be noted for justification and commendation of the course which both Houses of Parliament have taken, about bringing most of this Land into a solemne Covenant. The Lord make men faithfull in keeping it, and give a happy issue thereto.

17. For the peoples good in their necessity he remitted of his own right. For he was by the King appointed a *Governour*; and Governours had allowances due to them, which former Governours had taken: By reason hereof they were chargeable to the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver (that is, five pounds sterling; for a shekell is halfe an ounce, which makes two shillings six pence: They exacted the fore-said bread and wine, that is, all manner of provision, (* besides the forty shekels, which was their set allowance) But, saith he, from the time that I was appointed to be their Governour, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the Governour. He renders this reason hereof, because of the feare of God.

They therefore that feare the Lord will be like minded: they will not over-strictly stand upon their right, especially in times of necessity, and cases of extremity. Over-strict standing upon right may prove a great oppression.

18. He, though a Governour, did beare a part in that which he required others to doe. I also, saith he, continued in the worke of the wall: neither bought we any Land: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the worke. He had done much for them through the Kings favour to him, and through that power and authority which the King had given him: For he obtained for them as much timber as was needfull out of the Kings Forrest: He drew on others that were able to help on the building of the wals: He made speciall provision for their security against their adversaries: He did many other good turnes for them; yet so long as there remained any thing which might further be done by him or his, all that he had done, though it were much, seemed to him too little.

Neh. 5. 14. 15.
Siclus 5. Scrip-
tura ponderabat
staterem unum,
seu semunciam
Shind.

אֲחֵרֵי
וְשִׁלְיָם

Post argenti fi-
clos, postquam
accepissent ab
eis 40 siclos ar-
genti, olim con-
stitutos decibus
pro victu suo.

Vatabl
summu jus
summa injuria
Sic. Offic. l. 1. c.
Orat. pro Mur.
Neh. 5. 16.
Neh. 2. 8.

A worthy patterne this is to such as have done much good, to observe whether yet there be any thing wherein they may doe more good, *Let us not be weary in well-doing.*

Gal. 6. 9.

19. He was given to Hospitality, and used it without grudging. For there were at his Table one hundred and fifty of the Jewes and Rulers, besides those that came unto them from among the Heathen. So as he entertained all of all sorts: such as had their habitations thereabouts, and such as were strangers and came out of other countries. Thus he made his entertainment not onely a worke of courtesie in affording it to Neighbours and Rulers, who might have provided for themselves: but also of charity in extending it to strangers. How bountifull he was therein is made evident by the daily provision prepared for those purposes, as one Oxe, six choice Sheepe: also Fowles once in ten dayes, and store of all sorts of wine. Hospitality to strangers as well as others, is so acceptable to God, as he sent Angels with blessed tydings to be guests to such persons: and Christ reckons up this worke of charity in speciall and by name among those which he doth most abundantly recompence.

Rom. 12. 13.

1 Pet. 4. 9.

Neh. 1. 17.

Heb. 13. 2.

Gen. 18. 1. &c.

& 19. 1. &c.

Heb. 13. 2.

Mat. 25. 34, 35.

I will conclude this particular with that exhortation which Christ gave upon anothers act of Hospitality, *goe and doe likewise.*

Luk. 10. 37.

20. Whatsoever he did, he did in respect to God. He expected no reward from man: nor did he propound any benefits to himselfe: nor did any thing on his respects. My Text gives a plain demonstration hereof. For thereby we see that his mind was fixed on his God. On God he calls to think upon him, from God he expects his reward for all that he had done. How many *Nehemiahs*, how many good and zealous Patriots would this and other Kingdomes have, if we had many men of place and parts so minded? Every one that minds God in every good thing that he doth, and expects his reward from him, in such a way, after such a manner as *Nehemiah* did, may with like confidence say to God, *Thinke on me my GOD for good, according to all that I have done for this people.*

By this recollection of the principall acts of this Patriot, you see what remarkable matters he did: what difficulties and dangers hee passed thorow, what encouraged and emboldned him to

καὶ πάλιν καὶ
 λέγει
 Μαρτυρεῖτε ὅτι
 ὁ θεὸς ὁμοιωσάμενος
 αὐτὸν (virtutem
 intelligit) καὶ
 ἑωχῆς, &c.
 Hehod.

stand against so many, mighty, malignant adversaries as he met withall, and what was the happy issue of all. Hereby also you may further see what becomes worthy Patriots to doe: what dangers and difficulties they may meet withall: (for what excellent worke is not environed with many difficulties, yea and dangers too?) with what courage and constancy they ought to stand against malignant parties: on whom they may securely place their confidence: and on what ground any one may say, *Thinke on me my GOD, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.*

Thus have I brought you againe to my Text: which (as you heard before) affords many considerable Observations. So much time hath bin spent in setting out the patterne of a worthy Patriot, as there can be no expectation of handling all the nine Doctrines collected out of this Text. The first is the chiefest of all and comprizeth the pith of all the rest within it. May I have liberty and ability to touch upon it, I will give place to my reverend Brother, that with greater strength may hold out the solemnization of this daies humiliation.

The first Observation is this,

God is the Support of Saints.

1. He is a *Support*, because he is *God*.
2. He is so to *Saints*, because he is a *peculiar God* to them.
3. *Saints* know it to be so, in that they are *Gods Remembrancers*, and call upon him to *thinke* upon them.
4. *Saints* with more confidence rest on God for Support, because his mind is soonest drawne to them: whereupon every *Saint* saith to God, *thinke upon me.*
5. Their expectation of good from God further shewes, that they take him for their Support.
6. Their pleading of their workes before God, gives further proofe to the point.
7. The rather in that their workes are the rule according to which God rewards them.
8. And in that he rewardeth every good worke of theirs.
9. And finally, in that God hath most and best respect to that which is done to *his people.*

Thus you see how the eight subsequent Doctrines have an eye to

to the first : so as I had cause to say, that the first compriseth the pith of all the rest within it. I come now directly and distinctly to handle it by it selfe. It is this.

God is the Support of Saints.

Many, many Epithites attributed to him in sacred Scripture, are as so many proofs of the point : such as these, ^a *Refuge*, ^b *House of defence*, ^c *Shelter*, ^d *Fortresse*, ^e *high Tower*, ^f *Buckler*, ^g *Rocke*, ^h *Hiding place*, ⁱ *Saviour*, ^k *Redeemer*, ^l *Deliverer*, ^m *Helper*, ⁿ *Rewarder*, yea ^o *Salvation*, ^p *Redemption*, ^q *Help*, ^r *Exceeding great Reward*. These latter Epithites being in the abstract (whereby is shewed that all Salvation, Redemption, Helpe and Reward arise onely and wholly from him) add much Emphasis to the point.

There are two especiall grounds thereof.

1. Saints taking God to be their Support.

2. Gods undertaking to be to his Saints, what they take him to be.

To him on all occasions they have recourse for Support : and He answerably supporteth them that have recourse to him. He never faileth them that seek him.

Three things move Saints to take God for their Support.

1. The many enemies and dangers whereunto they are here subject. This world is a wilderness: full of wild and ravenous Beasts. All sorts of wicked men are those wild and ravenous Beasts : they are as Lyons, Tigers, Bears, Wolves, and such like. Saints are as Sheep and Lambes. In allusion hereunto saith Christ, *Behold I send you forth as Sheepe in the midst of Wolves*. This their condition in this world makes them seeke for a Support.

2. Their owne manifold infirmities by reason of the flesh which they carry about them. They are (to use the woman of Tekoahs phrase) *as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up againe* : or to use a more pertinent comparison, *They are as a Vine full of most sweet and usefull fruit, yet so weake, as it cannot stand of it selfe, without a frame, or some other support to beare it up*. The weakenesse of Saints makes them seek for a strong support : which they know God to be.

3. The impotency and disability of any creature to helpe and support them. All creatures are as reeds, weake, bricke, full of teeth : if they be leaned upon they will soone breake and teare

^a Ps. 14. 6.
^b & 31. 2.
^c & 61. 3.
^d & 18. 2.
^e & 119. 14.
^f & 112. 49. 26.
^g & 40. 17.
^h & 54. 4.
ⁱ Heb. 11. 6.
^j Ps. 17. 1.
^k 1 Cor. 13. 9.
^l Ps. 115. 9.
^m Gen. 15. 1.

Mat. 10. 16.

2 Sam. 14. 14.

Ezek. 29. 6, 20.]

the flesh of such as leane upon them. So as it is not onely unusefull and in vaine, but also dangerous and damageable to rest on meere creatures for a support.

More then three things move God to be for his Saints, what they take him to be : as

1. That ancient love which of his owne good-will he did beare to them before they were, yea before the worlds were. This doth the Apostle lay downe as the ground of all those spirituall blessings wherewith God blesseth us, Ephes. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6. This he makes the ground of Gods *quickning us together with Christ, and of his raising us up together, and making us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Iesus,*

Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6.

2. That price which the Sonne of God hath paid for them, which was his owne *precious blood,* Hereby he obtained eternall redemption for them.

1 Cor 6. 20.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Heb. 9. 12.

3. That continuall *intercession* which he maketh for them at the right hand of his Father. Hereby he procureth continuance of Gods fauour to them.

Rom. 8. 34.

Heb. 7. 25.

4. That stamp or impression of Gods image, which the Holy Ghost hath set in them, and whereby they are *sealed unto the day of Redemption :* Hereby God knoweth them to be his.

Eph. 1. 13.

& 4. 30.

5. The many promises which God hath made to them of caring and providing for them, and of protecting them from all dangers and evils, and *faithfull is he who hath promised,*

Heb. 10. 23.

6. Their faith in resting upon those promises. This makes them put God in mind thereof, as He did, who thus said, *Remember thy word* (meaning his word of promise) *upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*

Ps. 119. 49.

This Act of Saints in taking God for their support is an evidence of that *wisedome and prudence wherein God, according to the riches of his grace, hath abounded towards them.* For such as are not able to stand of themselves, to seeke a Support, and such an one as of it selfe can sufficiently support them, so as they need seeke to no others, is questionlesse an especiall part of prudence. But such a support the Lord is. For

1 Information
in the wisdom
of Saints who
take God for
their support.
Eph. 1. 7, 8.

3 Chr. 16. 9.

1. *The eyes of the Lord runne to and fro throughout the whole Earth to see who is strong in the behalfe of them, whose heart is perfect towards him :* so as he is not, he cannot be ignorant of the need

needs or distresses of any of his Saints. *I have surely seen the affliction of my People, saith the Lord.*

Exod. 3. 7.

As the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, so his eares are open to their prayers. What cry soever they make to him in their distresse for succour and support, he heareth.

1 Pet. 3. 12.

3. He is ready and forward to doe what he seeth to be needfull and usefull for them, *I know their sorrowes, and I am come downe to deliver them, saith the Lord to his people that were in distresse.* Many promises hath he made for granting their desires. The more to set out Gods forwardnesse in granting his Saints desires, an Angell sent from God to Daniel while he was praying, thus saith, *At the beginning of thy supplication the Commandements came forth, &c.* and the Lord himselve, thus, *before they call I will answer, and whiles they are yet speaking I will heare,*

Psal. 50. 15.

Dan. 9. 23.

Isa. 65. 24.

4. He is full of compassion: in so much as his bowels are troubled for his children when they are in any distresse: thereupon he maketh this inference, *I will surely have mercy upon them.* Nothing sooner moves any to succour and support, then compassion. It is oft noted to be the cause of that ready succour which Christ in the daies of his flesh afforded to all that came to him, that he had compassion on them, and was moved therewith.

Psal. 86. 15.

Ier. 31. 20.

5. He is able to support his in their greatest weaknesses, and to deliver them out of their greatest distresse. Behold (saith the Lord) *I am the Lord the God of all flesh. Is there any thing too hard for me? The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*

Mat. 14. 14.

& 15. 30.

Mark. 1. 41.

Luk. 7. 13.

Ier. 32. 27.

Luk. 18. 27.

6. As God is mighty in strength, so in wisdom. His understanding is infinite. He best knoweth when to support his and how: yea, and how long to continue his support to them. If at any time he seeme to leave them to themselves, he doth it purposely, prudently, for good ends, to good uses. And even then when he suffers them to lye under affliction, he so wisely supporteth them, as they are enabled to endure it, and are not overburdened: Witness he that said, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despaire; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast downe, but not destroyed: Yea, through his wisdom (as at first he commanded the lights to shine out of darknesse, so) he bringeth much good to Saints out of their troubles. For we know that all things*

Iob. 36. 5.

Psal. 147. 5.

2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.

2 Cor. 4. 6.

worke

Psal. 119. 71.

work together for good to them that love God. This by good experience he found to be true in himselfe, who said, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*

These considerations of the notice that God hath of his peoples state and case, of his hearing their prayers, of his forwardnesse to grant their desires, of his compassion at their distresse, of his power and ability to help, and of his wisdom in ordering the season and manner of succour: These and other like considerations give a cleare and evident demonstration, that God is a safe, sure, and secure support, whereby the wisdom of Saints is manifested in taking him for their support. In this therefore respect, as in many others, it may be said of them, *Surely this is a wise and understanding people.*

Deut. 4. 6.

1. Demonstration of their folly who take not God for their support.
Psal. 14. 1.

On the other side, it must needs be a part of egregious folly and plaine dosage, to confide in, or trust unto any other support then this God. Yet most in the world are such dotting fooles: As,

1. *Atheists*, who say in their hearts there is no God. Surely they who deny him to be, will not rest on him for support.

2. *Pagans*, who being ignorant of the one only true God, place their confidence on such things as never were, never had any true being, but were meere phantasies and imaginations of mens vain brain. Such as *Baalim*, *Asteroth*, *Dagon*, *Molech*, and such other as are mentioned in sacred Scripture: And *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Apollo*, *Diana*, *Mercury*, *Venus*, and multitudes of the like reckoned up by the heathen. One of their Poets reckoneth up about thirty thousand of them: Others more.

Hesiod. in Georg.

Parab. Pilgr. of Asa, l. 4. c. 1.

3. *Indian Savages*, who make the Devill their support, and adore him, that he may not hurt them and their cattell. A part of their cuntry is called *Terra Diaboli*, the *Devils Land*. To resort upon these in their own kind, Not only no hurt, but good, is to be expected from such as are adored, as it is in my Text, Think upon me for good.

4. *Papists*, who make the innumerable company of Angels, the blessed *Virgin Mary*, *Apostles*, *Confessors*, *Martyrs*, and all that their Popes have canonized: Whereof some may be accounted such as the forementioned gods of the *Pagans*, meere phantasies and imaginations; and others, without breach of charity, may be judged to be damned wretches in Hell.

5. *Worldlings*,

5. *Worldlings*, who rest on mortall men, and earthly meanes, which are all like to the forementioned weake reed full of teeth. The Prophet denounceth a *woe* against such.

Isai. 31. 1.

6. *Self-boasters*, who trust to themselves, to their own parts, or to that command which they have over others: As *Ahisbophel* who relied on his own wit; *Goliath* on his own strength; the *Assyrian* on the great command which he had; so others to other things; all which turn to their ruine.

2 Sam. 16. 21.
and 17. 1, &c.
1 Sam. 17. 6.
&c.
Isai. 10. 8, &c.

Of all these, and others like to these, I may, concerning the case in hand, take up the Prophets patheticall Exclamation, *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord: For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountaine of living waters, and hewed them out cisternes, broken cisternes that can hold no water.*

Jer. 2. 12, 13.

As for you that have been so farre enlightened as to know God to be the only sure and safe support, and thereupon have been moved to take him for your support, be now further in the name of this God exhorted, to use him as a support. Use him as a *Refuge*, *Shelter*, *House of Defence*, *Fortresse*, *high Tower*, *Buckler*, *Shield*, *Rock*, *Hiding place*. These resemblances will afford good help for making a right use of the Lord in this very point, as he is a support to his Saints.

3. Exhortation
to use God as a
Support.

1. A *Refuge* is a place for such as are in danger to fly unto for succour and security. Such were the Cities of Refuge among the *Jewes*. When a man was unjustly suspected of wilfull murder, and hotly pursued by the avenger of blood, he made all the speed he could to the City of Refuge. There was his cause rightly judged, there might he be secure. Doe you also fly to God in all undue suspicions and unjust accusations. In him you may be sure to have your cause righted, and your persons secured.

2. A *Shelter* is for such as in their journey are overtaken with showres of rain, with haile, snow, storme or tempest: In such cases, if a traveller espie a shelter, he will make haste to it. God hath undertaken to be a *covert from storme and raine*. When the raging raine of oppression, or storme of persecution, or violent tempest of any malignant opposition falls upon you, shelter your selves under the covert of your God.

Isai. 4. 5.

3. An *House of Defence*, or *Castle*, or *Fortresse*, or *High Tower*,

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are

are all for safety against armies of enemies that compasse us about, and besiege us, and would utterly destroy us, if we had not such a place of safety. Now the Lord is indeed an high and strong Tower, an impregnable Castle: abide therefore in him, and feare not, though multitudes of enemies doe on every side set against you. They are safe whom the Lord doth keep.

Eph. 6. 16.

4. A *Buckler* or *Shield* is of singular use to keep off push of pike, stroake of sword, force of dart, arrow or bullet that shall be flung, or shot against us: So faith in God will keep off all assaults of Satan, even all the *fiery darts of the Devil*; much more the furious, envious, and malicious words and deeds of wicked men.

Mat. 7. 24, 25.

5. A *Rocke* is a firme and sure foundation. An edifice that is well erected and settled on it, cannot be overthrowne. Though the rain descend and the floods come, and the wind blow, and beat upon that house, yet it falls not, because it is founded on a rock. For application of this Metaphor, note what Christ saith of himselfe as he is a rocke: *Upon this Rocke will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevaile against it.*

Mat. 16. 18.

Again, a rock being in the Sea remaines immoveable: The strongest tempests and violentest waves of the Sea cannot shake it, much lesse overthrow it. If therefore any who have suffered shipwrack lye floating on the Sea, and espy a rock, they will make to it: so in our greatest troubles, and most desperate dangers, let us get to God the rock of our salvation, and we may be sure to be safe.

6. An *hiding place* is that wherein many beasts doe repose themselves on all occasions: As a Conies burrow, a Foxes hole, a Lions den: when they are there they thinke themselves safe: There therefore they use to sleep; there they use to carry the prey they get, and there to eat it: if they be hunted, or fear any danger, they will make thither as fast as they can: If they be hurt or wounded, there they use to lick themselves whole: yea, in these their hiding places they die for the most part, if at least, they be not surpris'd, and kill'd, when they are out of their den, or hiding place. Seeing it pleaseth the Holy Ghost to attribute unto God this resemblance of safety (For the Psalmist stileth God his *hiding place*: and the Prophet a *covert*) give me leave in Christs phrase to say unto you, *Behold the beasts of the field*: Behold them

in

Psal. 119. 114.

סתר

Latibulū meū.

Isai. 4. 6.

מסתור

abscutio.

in this particular, and use God your hiding place, as they use their holes and dennes. On all occasions repose your selves on him, and rest secure in him when ye sleep, when ye wake. Have ye good successe in your affaires? (as the beast thinkes he hath when he gets a prey) goe to God to rejoyce in him, and to give the praise to him. Doe thy affaires succeed ill? even then also goe to God, to mourne in him, to poure out thy soule into his bosome. Art thou hunted or persecuted? fly to God for succour and protection. Art thou abused, wronged, or hurt? To God for redresse and right. In peace and trouble, in hope and feare, in safety and danger, in all cases, on all occasions have recourse to God, live in God, die in God.

Doe this the rather, because as followeth in the next Observation.

The Lord is a peculiar God to a Believer.

But my time is slipt out, and I find my strength to faile, and you find my voice to fall, willingly therefore I give place to my reverend brother: Only let us first call upon God for his blessing upon that which hath been delivered, and give him thanks for his gracious assistance.

FINIS.
